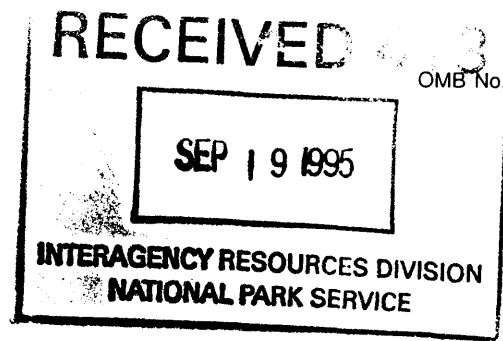


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Still, Dr. James, Office

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 209 Church Road N/A not for publication

city or town Medford Township N/A vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ county Burlington code 005 zip code 08055

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick Andrews

11/3/95

Still, Dr. James (Office)
Name of Property

Burlington County, NJ
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Health care/Office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Aluminum Siding

roof Asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Still, Dr. James (Office)
Name of Property

Burlington County NJ
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage/Afro-American

Medicine

Period of Significance

1860-1885

Significant Dates

c. 1860

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Still, Dr. James (1812-1885)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government County Library
- University Rutgers University
- Other

Name of repository:

Still, Dr. James (Office)
Name of Property

Burlington County, NJ
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property .052 acre Mount Holly Quad

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	18	744928	0395451
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	8	514990	4418200

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

(Significance Statement co-authored by Mariana Chilton, U.of Pa.Dept.Folklore/Folklife
name/title Jon Harris, Chairman of Medford Historic Advisory Board
Betty H. Trumbower, member of same Board
organization Medford Historic Advisory Board date April 25, 1995
street & number Jon - 178 Taunton Boulevard Jon - (609)596-7202
Betty - 26 Fostertown Road telephone Betty - (609)654-7102
city or town Medford state NJ zip code 08055

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert Trollinger, Jr.
street & number Medford-Mount Holly Road telephone (609)654-7752
city or town Medford state NJ zip code 08055

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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RECEIVED 413
SEP 19 1995 NJ Dr. James Still office
Burlington Co.
INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Description

Dr. James Still's Office is a small, one story, wood frame building built in 1836 and remodeled around 1860-70. It is located on the north side of Church Road, several hundred yards east of Cross Roads, in Medford Township, Burlington County, New Jersey. The building is a one story above basement, hipped roof structure with the main floor raised approximately three feet above the surrounding finish grade. The structure is wood frame on a masonry foundation. The foundation is parging finish on stone.

The existing original part of the building displays elements of the Italianate Style. There is a banded entablature around the body of the main structure, above the door and window plates and continuous to the eaves. Within that feature element there are a number of turned wood ornamental brackets, regularly spaced along the length of the entablature. The four corners of the main structure at the eaves are additionally embellished with a turned wood ornament mounted to the eaves at each of four corners.

The existing aluminum siding was installed over horizontal 6" wood lap siding. The fair to poor condition of that concealed wood siding suggests that it is original to the structure.

Shed additions are attached to the east (side) and north (rear) sides of the main structure. A columned porch at the front elevation facing Church Road does not display the Italianate detailing apparent on the main structure, and therefore does not appear to be a part of the original structure. The porch roof is attached to the main structure below the entablature.

The front entrance (single) door is centrally located at the front elevation, and is flanked by double hung windows. The present door appears to be a replacement of the original door, because there is a suggested height of eight feet in the original door trim, and neither is a transom unit present, nor does there appear to have been one at any time. The adjacent window header height is approximately eight feet. The floor to ceiling height appears to be approximately 10 feet at the main floor level.

The existing windows are six over six wood double hung sash, with equally proportioned upper and lower sash units. Older photographs and renderings suggest that the existing windows are original. There are aluminum storm windows affixed to the exterior of the windows.

There are several outbuildings adjacent to Dr. Still's Office, however they fall outside the boundaries as established for this National Register Nomination. These outbuildings appear to be of mid-twentieth century origin.

Dr. Still's Office is presently a single family rental property. Access to the interior could not be obtained.

There are no surviving landscaping features within the site boundaries of this nomination which appear to be original or dating to the time in which this building was built and occupied by Dr. Still. Archeological evidence of Still's adjacent residence may remain (see significance statement and historical photo), but the house itself was demolished in 1932 (Beck:34).

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NJ Burlington Co.
Dr. James Still office

Section number 8 Page 1

Significance

This small wood frame building, erected in 1836, served for about four decades as the medical office of Dr. James Still (1812-1885), who became known as "the Black Doctor," and was recognized for his careful, experimental approach to the practice of medicine and the remarkable effectiveness of his treatments. Though an African-American and prevented by his race from training for a traditional career as a physician, Still became an herbalist and broke through the color barrier in southern New Jersey society to serve a mostly white clientele. His reputation as a medical man was cemented in 1877 with the publication in Philadelphia of his memoir, *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still*. This property meets National Register Criterion B in the areas of Medicine and Ethnic Heritage/African American, for its association with Still, a figure of state-wide importance in these areas.

Early Life

James Still was born near Indian Mills in what was then Evesham Township, Burlington County, a few miles southeast of the subject property, on April 9, 1812. His parents were Levin and Charity Still, who had been born into slavery in Maryland. Levin bought his freedom and came to New Jersey. Charity followed sometime later, escaping her bondage with only two of their four children. They reunited in New Jersey about 1810 and settled in Evesham.

The Township of Evesham was one of the largest townships in New Jersey. It included all of what is now Mount Laurel Township, the part of Hainesport Township located south of the Rancocas Creek; all of the present Medford Township; Medford Lakes; half of Shamong Township, down to and including Indian Mills; and all of Lumberton Township. In the early 19th century, the seat of government of this large township was at the village of Cross Roads, which was about a mile north of the center of Upper Evesham (now the village of Medford), on the road to Mount Holly. By an Act of the Legislature on February 4, 1847, Medford Township was "set apart" from Evesham. On March 9, 1847, the first annual township meeting of Medford was held at Cross Roads.

James Still grew up near Cross Roads. He was "bound" for a period of three years to a Quaker farmer, Amos Wilkins, whose home is still standing on the Medford-Mt. Holly Road a few miles north of Cross Roads, in what is now Lumberton Township. Part of the agreement with Mr. Wilkins was that James be permitted to go to school one month each winter. He attended the Brace Road school, a few miles west of Cross Roads on Church Road; the school was demolished many years ago. In addition, once James reached the age of twenty-one it was Amos Wilkins' duty to give James ten dollars in cash and a new suit.

Once on his own, it took several years for Still to begin his medical work. After leaving Wilkins, James worked in a glue factory in Philadelphia during most of 1833. There, he opened his first bank savings account and within about a year he had saved the considerable sum of one hundred dollars. In 1834, he went to work for Josiah Thorn near Fostertown, New Jersey, where he would meet his first wife, Angelina (Anna) Willow. They were married on July 25, 1835, and in the next year they gave birth to a daughter, Beulah. In 1836, Still bought part of the subject property for \$100 from Isaac Haines, a local Quaker. After clearing away the brush from the property, Still bought a small, unfinished house from Nathan Wilkins, another local Quaker, then borrowed several two-horse teams and wagons, and rented a four-horse wagon from a third Quaker, Levi

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NJ Burlington Co.
Dr. James Still office

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Jones, to move the house to the lot and reconstruct it, which then became his office and temporary living quarters. It is this building, subsequently remodeled, that still stands on the property. He and Henrietta were then able to leave the other little house they had been renting in the Cross Roads area. In 1837 Still bought four adjoining acres from Ira Haines, another Quaker, on which Still planned to build a larger home in the future. Tragically, however, Angelina died on August 12, 1838, after which James took their daughter Beulah to live with his mother. Soon thereafter, James met Henrietta Thomas, who lived as a servant in Vincentown, NJ. They were married on August 8, 1839, but three days later, Beulah died. James and Henrietta gave birth to James Jr. on July 12, 1840; several other sons and daughters followed.

Still's Medical Career and Popularity

When he was still a young boy, James was given an immunization (most likely for smallpox) by a traveling physician on horseback. Since then he had always wanted to be a doctor, riding around and "performing miracles". He kept this idea in his mind through his childhood and his twenties, until he finally began his medical career by purchasing a still from William Jones, a farmer in Lumberton, and a botany book, and a book which gave instructions for making pills, powders, tinctures, salves and liniments from a bookseller in Philadelphia. These books cost him less than three dollars.

He began by driving his horse and wagon every two weeks to Philadelphia to sell distilled sassafras oil and peppermint oil to druggists Charles and William Ellis, a practice he would continue for several years until his own medical practice became established. Sassafras is indigenous to this continent and was used in the medical practices of American Indians. It also was adopted to "strengthen blood" among African Americans and whites alike. Peppermint was commonly used for stomach problems, such as colic and other gastrointestinal troubles by Indians, African Americans, and whites.

He also began making a variety of other remedies, for home consumption. After successfully treating some of his own family members, he began to seek a wider outlet for his products, while at the same time some of his neighbors began seeking his help. Cautious, and knowing that he would be unable to obtain a license to practice medicine, Still approached an attorney in Mount Holly, who advised him that while he could sell his herbal medicines and charge to deliver them, he could not legally administer the medicines himself. Armed with this reassurance, Still began selling his remedies locally.

His first paying patients were his white neighbors, and throughout his career the majority of his patients were white. His business boomed, and he was soon able to repay all his land purchase debts. By 1845 his medical practice had increased so much that he no longer had time to make the sassafras and peppermint oils himself that he was selling to the Philadelphia druggists, so he hired a local man named Abraham Carson to work for him. About a year later, however, Still decided he could not afford to carry an employee to prepare the oils, so he gave up that part of his business to concentrate on his strictly medical practice.

In the summer and fall of 1849, Still hired two men to build a new house for his family, and they moved into it on December 27, 1849. His medical practice was by this time so successful that he began to allow two hours each day for his patients' office visits, and the rest of the day he rode out to the homes of other patients. He had a wagon built for making his deliveries, in which he

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Dr. James Still officeSection number 8 Page 3

used an old cigar box for a medicine chest.

He continued to prosper through the 1850s and '60s. At one point in his memoir, for example, Still observed that "During the years of 1863 and 1864 I have but little to narrate, except my practice ...was extensive." In 1869 he had his home rebuilt, enlarging it to "forty feet front and twenty-six feet deep, with dining-room and kitchen back, with mansard roof, water-works, and all the modern improvements which was the first building of the kind in our neighborhood." A year later, he hosted the first Still family reunion on his property. (To this day, Still family reunions continue to be held each year.) His evident pride in his success and the fashionableness of his house is suggested by the presence of an illustration of his property in the 1876 atlas of Burlington County. The following year, his memoir appeared, published by the Quaker printing house, J.B. Lippincott, in Philadelphia.

Herbalism, Race, and the Professionalization of Medicine

Throughout his medical career, Dr. James Still practiced a rather mainstream form of botanical medicine. He made herbal teas using Peppermint, Boneset, Virginia Snakeroot and Catnip. He prepared emetics from Lobelia and Bloodroot, physics from Cream of Tartar and pulverized Cloves, and cough syrup from a combination of Comfrey, Horehound, Bloodroot and Skunk Cabbage roots, to which he added previously boiled water and white sugar to form the syrup.

Just what the sources of his medical recipes were is somewhat ambiguous. Clearly, as he claims, he may have learned most of his remedies from a book on botanical medicine that he bought in Philadelphia, and from a book on diseases. Thus he learned medicine, not through apprenticeship or school, but in a traditional professional manner through books and trial and error. Still does not claim to have received any of his medical knowledge from another person in the African American community, and he does not claim that his knowledge comes from Native American medical practices; however, it seems highly likely that he observed his own mother utilizing some healing remedies, and that many of the botanical therapies in home remedy books were based on the medicines that American Indians used in their own practices.

Still also claimed to have a special relationship to nature. He claimed to be stirred by the out-of-doors, due to having worked outside for most for his growing years. While laboring for Amos Wilkins, or while working in the fields or chopping wood, he claimed to be in "ecstasies." He went on "botanizing" trips through the fields and meadows and along the branches of the Rancocas Creek. He spent hours studying the plants and their medicinal properties, but always being careful to consult his "good botany book." Yet, while he was educating himself through books on botany and disease, he felt as if he were gaining knowledge he already had--as if through destiny and faith he would become a doctor. For him, nature was his teacher, his school, his source of knowledge. From nature, he wrote, "we learn what we are and what we ought to be. Thus every object of nature can furnish hints for contemplation" (198).

But Still worked in an era when the professionalization of medical practice was beginning to usurp the authority and tradition of rural herbal practitioners. As a self-educated doctor, he was a respected and much sought-after physician. But most aspiring physicians through the first half of the 19th century, if they had the financial power and if they were white, learned the practice of medicine through apprenticeships. As the nineteenth century progressed, medical schools were established, and they slowly transformed medicine into a veritable profession available to only a

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Dr. James Still officeSection number 8 Page 4

few. Aware that attendance at medical schools was becoming an important credential for physicians serving a white clientele, Still bitterly lamented that he had been unable to attend school as a child except the three months allotted to him when he was hired out. He reminded his readers that he would not be able to attend medical school because of his race. Thus denied a chance to participate in the professionalization of medicine through a conventional path, he educated himself about botanical therapeutics from books instead. "...Great minds are not made in schools," he wrote. (Autobiography, 5). He also thought "it strange that educated men treat those less fortunate with contempt who have no education" (5-6).

Still gradually became an herbalist. The use of herbs and roots for health and healing is common to all cultural traditions and is as old as humanity itself. In 19th century America, people of all races used herbs and roots that had long been in American Indian and European traditions, and African Americans adapted their practices to include the plants found on this soil. Over the centuries, it is impossible to delineate clear boundaries between American Indian, African American and European herbal healing traditions. During Dr. Still's time, there was a substantial number of rural physicians and housewives alike who used the herbs and roots found around their neighborhood. Using his basement as a place to create the remedies he sold, Still was no different than many other rural doctors who also made their own remedies. Whereas rural physicians often learned through apprenticeships to other physicians or herbal doctors, supplemented with reading and trial-and-error experimentation, Still had his natural talents and his books.

Thus, although an anomaly as a black doctor, Still was a part of the conventional heterogeneous practice of medicine during his time. In the first half of the nineteenth century, little was known about disease; there was no concept of germs, nor germ theory. Most physicians and non-physicians alike viewed fever as an indicator of disease; many treatments were based on treating the fever, not the sickness that it indicated. In this way, many of the same illnesses which we now consider distinct were treated as if they were the same disease because of the similarity of symptoms and fevers. The most common therapies almost always involved cleansing with emetics, or purgatives, and then strengthening through tonics. As Dr. Still suggests of his own knowledge, he had the ability to deal with diseases (fevers) and he believed that most of people's troubles with illness centered in the stomach. If the stomach is not well, then the body will not have the strength to fight off the disease. Since there was no standard regimen of remedies for diseases and fevers, the heterogeneity in treatments often gave clients the power to choose the physicians and remedies that they preferred, and doctors felt they had to compete for their patients.

Dr. Still's medical practice was an integral part of the populist turn in medicine that took place between 1830 and 1870. At the end of the eighteenth century, and up through the middle of the 1800s, many physicians practiced what is referred to as **heroic** medicine. Those who practiced such therapeutics--usually learned through apprenticeship or medical school--saw medicine as an active fight against nature, an outlook quite contrary to that of herbalists like Still. Surprisingly, the most prestigious mainstream therapeutics at this time continued to be blood letting, blistering, and the extreme use of minerals such as mercury and calomel (a derivative of mercury). Doctors would often administer these harrowing cures until the person would faint. And such therapies were, on the whole, ineffective in healing the patient, and they were dangerous. For instance calomel, as Dr. Still also explained, was a mineral poison that caused

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ulcers in the gums, enabled the loss of teeth, and broke down the walls of the stomach and intestines.

During the 1820's and 30s, however, heroic and drastic purging that often put people's lives in danger was coming under attack from the populace. Many counter-movements arose, such as homeopathy, hydrotherapy, and botanical medicine, which became officialized in a movement called Thomsonianism. During the beginning of the century, books of herbal remedies were widely used in people's homes. Such books were the bible of health maintenance and therapeutic treatment. In this sense, Thompsonianism did not mark a significant change in the way people in rural settings or of little formal education practiced home health care. Samuel Thompson published a book on herbal treatments, and prescribed specific regimens of botanical therapy based on the same idea of purging with emetics and strengthening with tonics. His botanical prescriptions were not new, and were already well known throughout the country. However what made him stand out for so many people, and what contributed to his popularity in the 1820s and 1830s was his strong criticism of heroic therapy that was practiced by influential doctors at the time. Thompson strongly recommended getting back to working with herbal and root cures for disease, and wrote outright against the heroic therapies of doctors who not only had no scientific or rational grounding for these treatments, but who put the lives of their patients in danger.

Though it seems unlikely that Dr. Still had read Thompson's book of therapies, which included with it a 200-page autobiography, it does seem likely that the book on botanicals that he bought for a dollar was influenced by the officialization of botanical medicine and touched with the words and philosophy of Thompson. Dr. Thompson and Dr. Still had similar interests. They not only had their understanding of natural remedies in common, but both strongly felt compassion for the poor and common person. Thompson, a white man, grew up in poverty in the Northeast, and learned many of his remedies from the local woman herbalist of his community. He felt that medical knowledge and knowledge of health and treatments should remain in the hands of the poor and uneducated as a source of empowerment. In fitting with the Jacksonian era, Thompson fell snug into the idea of every man for himself, and showed immense distrust for the growing and illusory authority of doctors. Dr. Still, as a self-educated doctor, also falls into this realm at a time when it was very popular to be choosing botanical remedies over the authority of heroic practice. Moreover, he was distrustful of the growing authority of upper class doctors who seemed to buy or demand the respect of wealthy clients. Both Still, and Thompson before him, had in common the desire to become a doctor from a young age, and persevered through poverty (and through racism for Still) to become practicing physicians.

The itinerant physician was still commonplace, though considered unofficial during the first half of the 19th century, and the practice of medicine and the variations of therapies were far more heterogeneous than the variations of disease at the time. During the early 19th century, however, those physicians who were concerned about maintaining their clientele and worried about the competition from other doctors, established physicians societies. At a time when doctors were competing for patients and differed in their therapeutic practices, the physicians societies were helpful in establishing a small community of physicians who practiced similar therapeutics. With the onset of these societies at the beginning of the century, the practice of medicine in some enclaves came to be standardized.

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The main activity that these groups busied themselves with was licensing. To create criteria for licensing, they were able not only to enjoy the prestige of being a part of a "society" but they were able to exert this sort of cultural authority in the social realm. For instance, in some areas no physician could operate without a license--especially if they did not adhere to the standards of treatment set by the societies. Licensing restrictions did not stop people from practicing medicine, yet these activities around licensing were another way for the societies to gain authority over other doctors and other health providers. For the most part, midwives and itinerant botanical doctors were exempt from the licensing laws.

During the times of heroic therapy, when heroics was an "orthodox" treatment, the public outcry was strong, and countered the wishes of the physicians who were beginning to separate themselves from the populace. In reality, however, most licenses seemed a powerful force only for physicians to claim unpaid money for their services. This battling over licensure directly affected doctors like Still, and presented confusion for most doctors. Of course, the other physicians who might have been jealous of Still's success and white, often wealthy clientele may have attempted to stop him from practicing medicine by suggesting he needed a license to practice. Dr. Still, to forestall this potential outcome, did not charge for services, nor prescribe medicines as if he were a physician, but rather collected his due through the "selling" of his medicines.

In competition with the medical societies and their monopoly on the ability to license, medical school was beginning to become a viable alternative for wealthy white men. Medical schools provided no clinical training, but with their high tuition and emphasis on chemistry, they became another way to establish the authority of medicine as a professional field in American society. At the same time, Dr. Still was a successful doctor traveling about in his wagon and preparing his own medicines in the basement of his house. His memoir conveys how strongly he felt about professionalized, heroic medicine. He reacted against the growing cultural authority of doctors, notwithstanding the unproven nature of heroic medicine and its evident lack of effectiveness. He described how people would put themselves in the hands of others when they did not know of a person's worth. He remarks, "how little we know of ourselves, [that we] are carried away by the opinions of others, [and that we] found our beliefs on the beliefs of others" (210-211). There could be nothing more true about the growing cultural authority that physicians were achieving through the prestige of their societies and schools.

Still got around this problem by claiming that he avoided competition with other doctors. He was often made aware that other doctors scorned him, not only by patients who turned to him and his remedies, but also because his own rising position in the community conflicted with the societal attitudes towards his race. Unlike the heroic doctors, Still claims he never forced his own medications on others; he let them decide for themselves whether to take medicines he prepared for them. In this way, he said, he did not compete with others. He lamented that at hospitals so many people were treated as if they were the same; Still stressed the importance of individualized treatment. Through his experience he found that people responded differently to the same medications, and he made every effort to recognize the specific and individual needs of his patients.

Towards the end of the century, official doctors claimed that they had "scientific" knowledge

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Dr. James Still office

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which distinguished them from the midwives, botanical doctors and hydrotherapists, and criticized those who used botanical medicine. When Still was asked to come and treat cancers that other doctors were unable to fix, if he succeeded in treating the cancer, other doctors would claim that what he treated was not cancer, but some other illness. Thus they attempted to close Still off from their prestigious place in society. He often saw that this arrogance around knowledge gained in school, and the supposed authority of "science" was opposed to the most common and basic knowledge that he poetically claimed came from nature. He admonished other doctors for believing, "as though nature had not written truth and science in every root of the forest and in every leaf that grows!" (194). Such faith in nature showed to be superior to the practices not only of heroic medicine, but to the new-found faith in amputation and other practices of the knife. Still described one case in the post-Civil War era, where a physician who had been an army doctor was waiting to amputate a man's arm where mortification had set in. Because of the ineffective treatment, and the fear and expense of amputation, Still was brought in to attend to the patient. Seeing that mortification had set in, he used an elm-bark poultice with yeast which aided in separating the dead flesh from the living flesh. In this way, with a little help from nature, and by allowing it to take its course, Still was able to bring this man back to health. Still thought the other doctor could have potentially killed the man with his overwhelming desire to amputate "with the white man's knife" (197). Still questioned how this could be reconciled with "reason, common sense, philosophy, or correct principles in surgery" (199). And again, he attributed it to the arrogance of physicians who gained from prestige only, and compared it to his way of understanding the world through nature: "the doctor claimed science ...; I have only observed nature. He treated the case in a scientific manner without success; I treated it according to the laws of nature" (197-8).

Dr. Still continued his practice until the mid-1870s, when two of his sons began to follow in his footsteps to practice medicine. Joseph Still, using his father's formulas, practiced in Mount Holly and may have even worked out of his father's office. In 1871, James Still, Jr. became only the second black man to graduate from Harvard Medical School. But slowed by a stroke about 1875, James Sr. retired shortly afterward, when he decided he could no longer meet the demands of his successful practice. Aware that he had lived a remarkable life, he began to write an autobiography, which was brought out in 1877.

James Still died in 1885, and was buried in the Colemantown Cemetery in Mount Laurel, New Jersey. His memoir, forgotten for a time, was brought back to public attention in the 1930s by Henry Charlton Beck in his story "The Doctor of the Pines," published in *Forgotten Towns of Southern New Jersey*. In 1970, belatedly recognized as a classic in African American history, it was reissued as part of a Black History series by the Negro Universities Press. The following year, it was also reprinted by the Medford Historical Society to recognize it for its local history importance.

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Dr. James Still office

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Dr. James Still office

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Boundary Description

The boundaries of the site of Dr. James Still's Office are as follows:

1. Starting at the front corner, (left hand front elevation when facing the front of the building), extending parallel to the building side elevation a distance of sixty three feet (63') to a point at the left hand rear elevation. From that point,
2. Extending perpendicular to the previous boundary line, and parallel to the building rear elevation, a distance of thirty six feet (36') to a point at the right hand rear elevation of the building. From that point,
3. Extending perpendicular to the previous boundary line, and parallel to the building side elevation, a distance of sixty three feet (63') to a point at the front right hand elevation of the building. From that point,
4. Extending perpendicular to the previous boundary line, and parallel to the building front elevation, a distance of thirty six feet (36') to a point (returning to the point of beginning) at the left hand front elevation of the building.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the site of Dr. James Still's Office are established as the immediate existing building and site, with a distance of approximately five feet beyond the furthestmost line of each of the four building elevations.

None of the existing outbuildings are included within the site boundaries as herein established, nor is the location of Dr. Still's house included within the boundaries described. The exact location of Dr. Still's main residence (demolished in 1932) to the east of Dr. Still's Office is not known; there are no obvious archaeological remains visible.

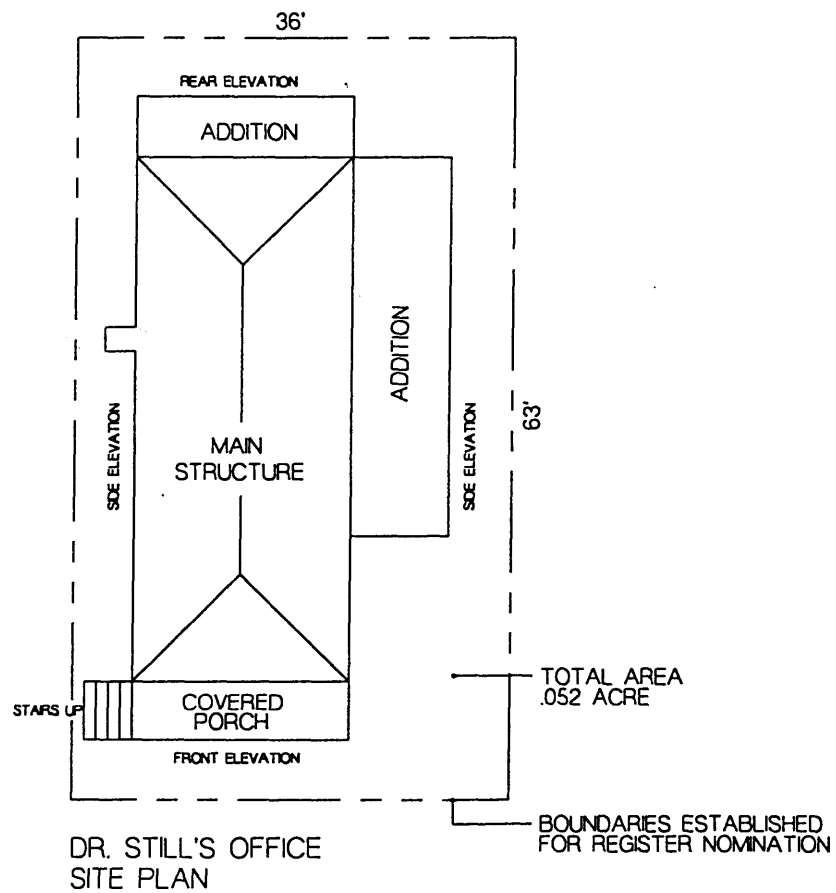
Refer to the following page (Section Number 10, Page 3) which graphically describes the previous Boundary Description and Boundary Justification.

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NJ Burlington County
Dr. James Still Office

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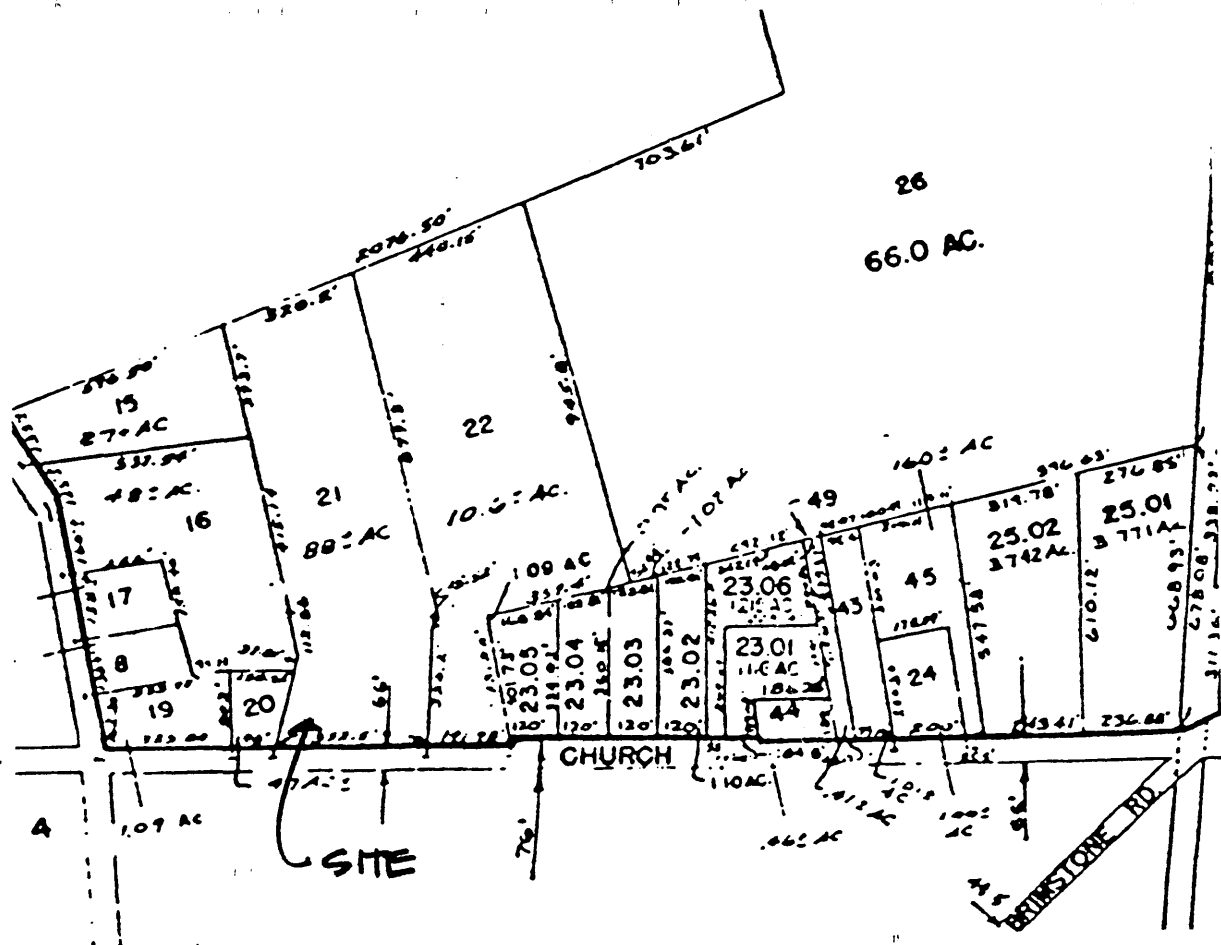
(Nominated property
is part of:
Block 302, Lot 21)

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NJ Burlington County
Dr. James Still Office

Section number _____ Page _____

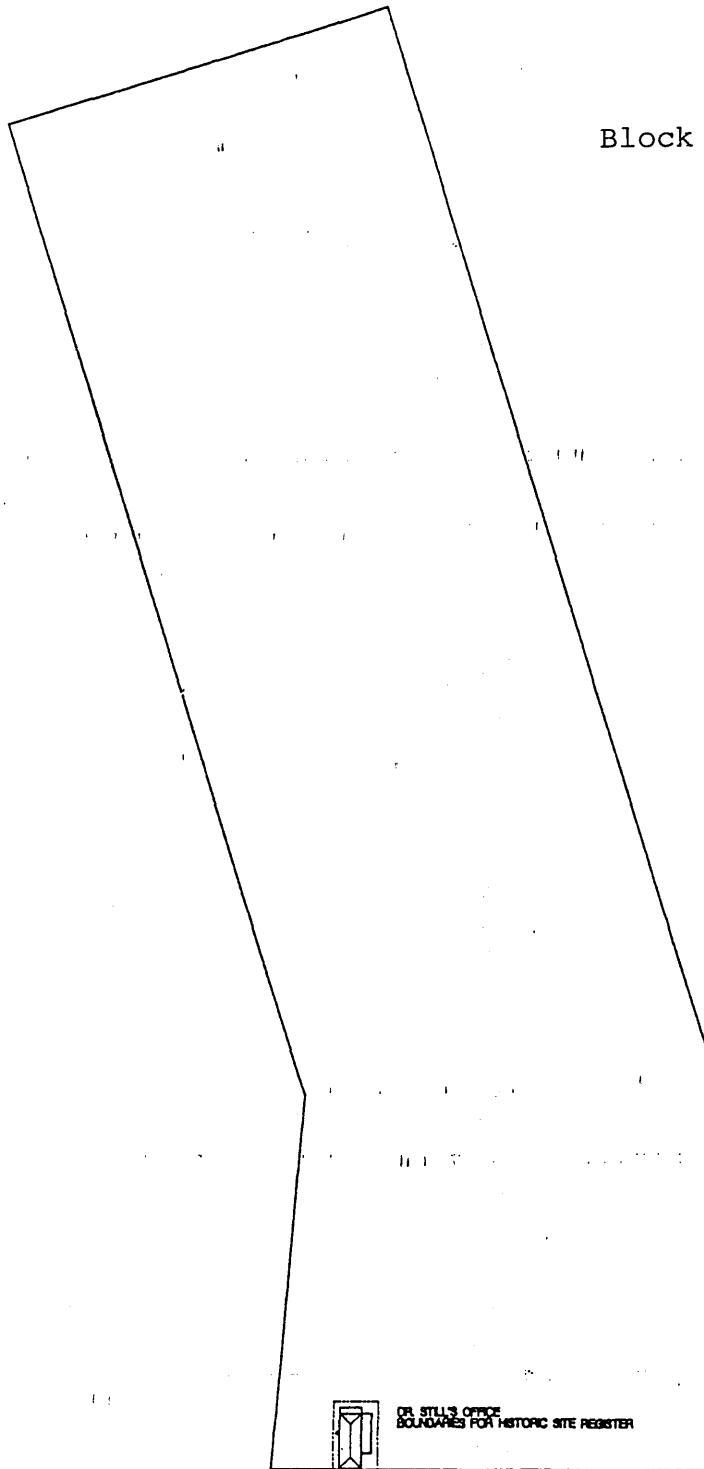


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Dr. James Still Office

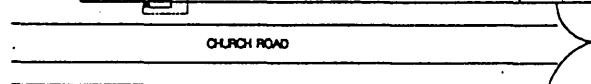
Section number _____ Page _____



Block 302, Lot 21



DR. STILL'S OFFICE
BOUNDARIES FOR HISTORIC SITE REGISTER



CHURCH ROAD

CHURCH ROAD RIGHT OF WAY

DR. STILL'S OFFICE
VICINITY PLAN

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National Park Service

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NJ Burlington County
Dr. James Still Office

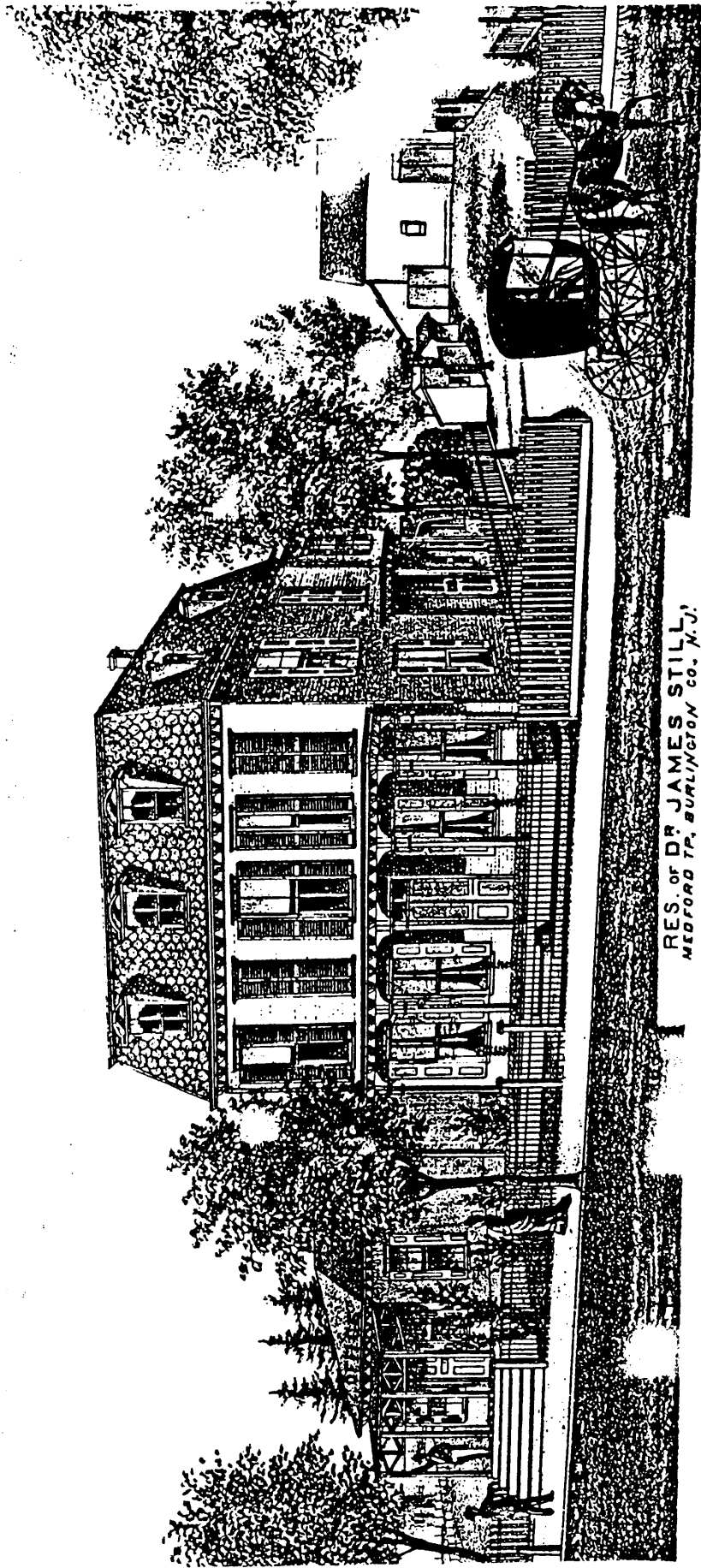
Section number _____ Page _____

Photograph Listing

- Photograph 1: Front elevation, facing Church Road
- Photograph 2: Side elevation, left side when facing front elevation
- Photograph 3: Rear elevation
- Photograph 4: Side elevation, right side when facing front elevation
- Photograph 5: Front right elevation detail at cornice

All photographs dated 5-6-95.

Photographer: Jon A. Harris, R.A., Medford NJ.



RES. OF DR. JAMES STILL,
MEDFORD TP., BURLINGTON CO., N. J.

Copy of photo by Everett F. Mickle, Medford, NJ, of Dr. Still's office and residence in 1876 from the Burlington County Atlas. Negative in the possession of Mr. Mickle, 17 Filbert Street, Medford, NJ 08055.

Dr. James Still Office
Medford Township,
Burlington County, NJ

9
4271 ac ±

14
92.7 ± AC.

(Nominated property
is part of:

Block 302, Lot 21)

Block 302

302

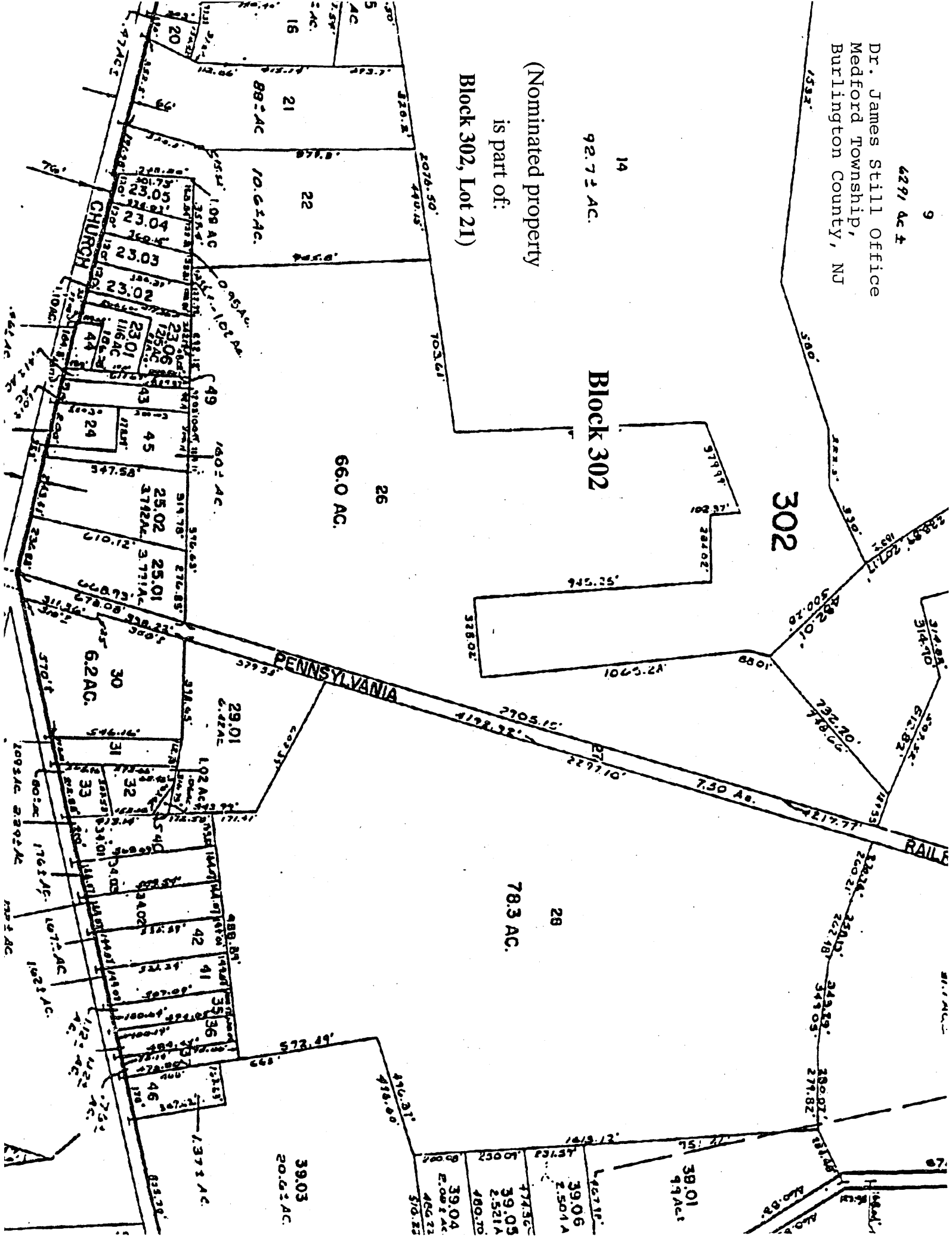
26
66.0 AC.

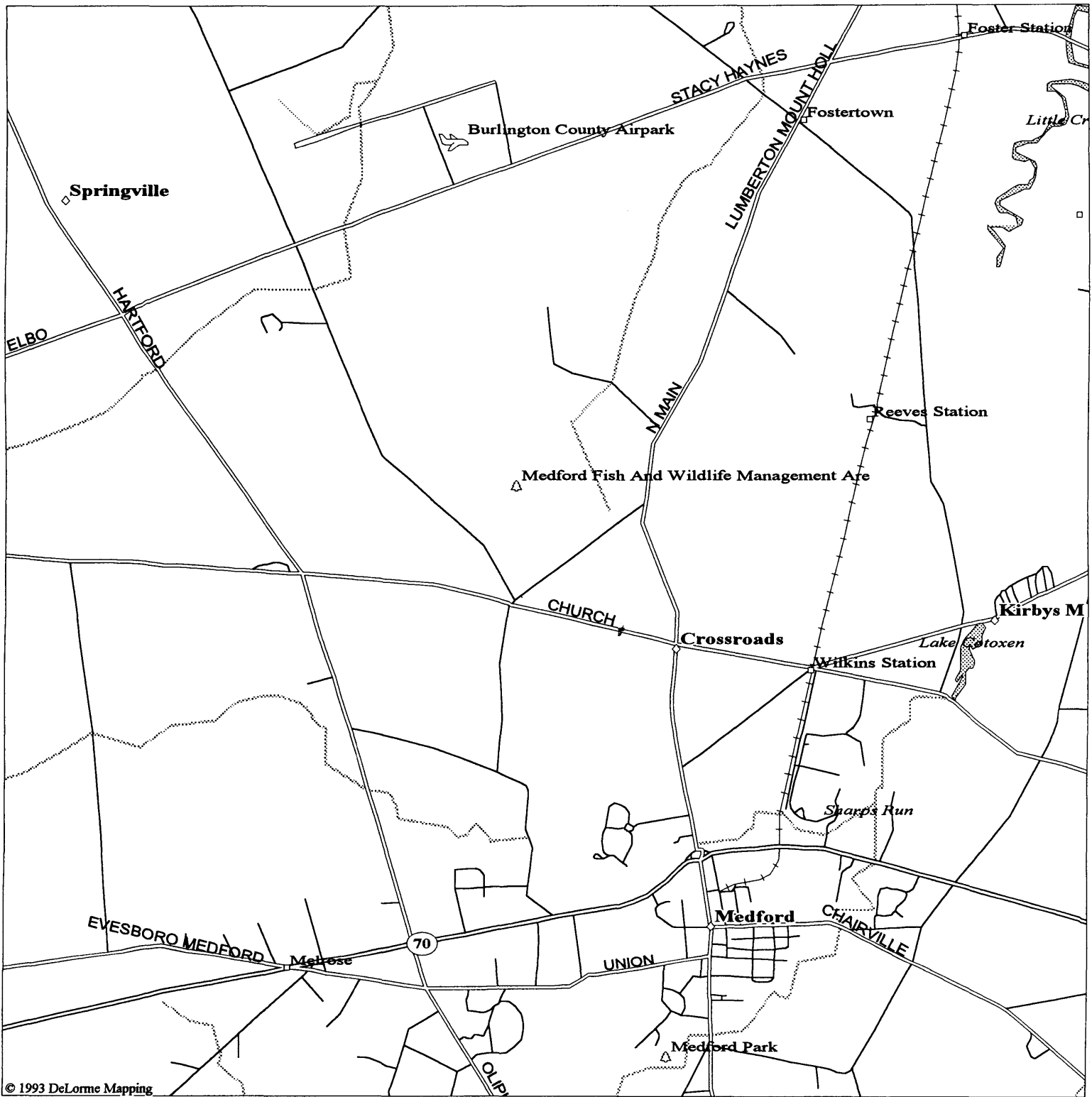
28
78.3 AC.

39.03
20.0 ± AC.

39.04
2.521A
480.70
480.72
310.22

39.01
49.9 AC ±





LEGEND

- State Route
- ◻ Geo Feature
- ◊ Town, Small City
- △ Park
- ✈ Airfield
- Street, Road
- Hwy Ramps
- Major Street/Road
- State Route

- +++ Railroad
- River
- Airfield
- ▨ Open Water

Scale 1:31,250 (at center)

2000 Feet

1000 Meters

Mag 14.00

Wed May 17 00:05:40 1995

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 95001190 Date Listed: 11/3/95

Dr. James Still Office Burlington NJ
Property Name: County: State:

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

7/17/96
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

The nomination form did not provide a UTM point; the SHPO has provided the following UTM point: E514990 N4418200. The form is amended to add this information.